

With Our
SAVIOR

FAMILY
DEVOTIONS
FOR LENT

*Creative
Communications
Sample*



CLAIRE MCGARRY

INTRODUCTION

We call Jesus “Our Savior” because he died on the cross to *save* us from our sins. There will never be anyone who makes such an enormous sacrifice for us.

As we journey through Lent with Our Savior, we’ll hopefully learn who God is calling us to be. We will still make mistakes, no matter how hard we try. We will still become selfish, angry or hurtful. That’s another reason we call Jesus “Our Savior,” because he wants to *save* us from our everyday battles too. And, sharing the faith as a family means that your family members will help you during Lent. Best of all, Jesus is always with us.

This booklet, I pray, can help to draw you closer to Jesus. And, by journeying through Lent with Our Savior, and every day thereafter, we can become the masterpieces that God has created us to be.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Fast From, Feast On

Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?” **MATTHEW 9:14**

IT’S NOT OUR PLACE TO JUDGE ANYONE ELSE. Our focus needs to be on how we’re going to follow in Jesus’ footsteps.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, accept my Lenten preparation as a sign of my gratitude for Our Savior giving up his life for me.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Think about how you’re going to journey through Lent with Our Savior. Are you going to give up something that’s important to you? Are you going to add something to your day to draw you closer to him?

Until We're Found

Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? **LUKE 15:4**

IN JESUS' TIME, A SHEPHERD'S JOB WASN'T JUST TO MAKE SURE HIS SHEEP HAD GRASS TO EAT AND WATER TO DRINK; HE ALSO HAD TO PROTECT HIS FLOCK. Sheep are so gentle that it's easy for wolves to catch them. So, the shepherd would watch over them by day and sleep beside them at night.

Spending so much time with them meant he knew each one individually. Often, out of love, the shepherd would give each sheep a name. If one went missing, it wasn't enough that he had ninety-nine others. One of his beloved creatures could be hurt, or even worse. His heart wouldn't stop hurting until he found his missing sheep.

Our Savior is our Good Shepherd. He knows each of us by name and watches over us always. If and when we stray from him, he'll never stop trying to lead us back. It isn't until we return to him that his heart stops hurting.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Good Shepherd, thank you for choosing me for your flock and for watching over me always.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Contact your local rescue center to see if anyone has lost an animal recently. See if your family can help find and reunite the pet with its owner.



Complete Generosity

Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had.

MARK 12:43-44

“WOW! I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU GOT ME THIS!” the mom exclaimed to her two sons as she unwrapped the necklace she’d been eyeing for a while. Then, gently, she added, “You two didn’t have the money for this.”

“Dimitri and I pooled our money,” Dominik grinned. “Yeah,” Dimitri chimed in. “We smashed our piggy banks! There was just enough to buy the necklace for you.”

Tears sprang to the mom’s eyes as she hugged her boys in deep gratitude. Sure, she’d received more expensive gifts before. But she’d never received anything where the givers had given their all. Her heart was filled to overflowing.

That’s exactly how Jesus felt when he watched the widow put money into the treasury. Others had put in more, but because they had extra; it didn’t mean much to them. In comparison, the poor widow put in the only two coins she had. Her generosity of spirit was by far the bigger donation.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, inspire me to give my all as often as I can.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » In the midst of your busy day, is there just one more kind thing you can do for someone? It can be something small. Can you do it, even if you don’t really have the time?

Love's Healing Touch

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me." **MARK 10:13-14**

IN 1987, DR. TIFFANY FIELD STUDIED THE IMPACT OF TOUCH ON BABIES BORN TOO EARLY. She discovered that even though all the premature babies ate the same amount, the babies that were massaged for fifteen minutes a day gained 47 percent more weight. Dr. Field said that she believed that it was sheer love: The massaged babies felt loved through the contact.



Talking to God in prayer has the same effect on us. We feel loved through contact with Our Savior.

When someone hugs us on a bad day, it makes things hurt less. Our Savior wants to be that someone. When he wraps us up in his great love, things do hurt less. When it is his will, he can take away the hurt completely.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, remind me, I pray, to always turn to you. When you wrap me up in your great love, I always feel better.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Try an experiment of your own. For one whole day, don't hug your family at all. The next day, hug them as much as you want. Compare your feelings. Share what you find.

Resisting Temptation

If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours. LUKE 4:7

ON MAHRE'S FIRST DAY AT HER NEW SCHOOL, SHE SAT BY HERSELF IN THE LUNCHROOM. Julia immediately came over and joined her. Although Julia was awkward and shy, she was also welcoming and kind. They sat together for the rest of the week.

During Mahre's second week, the popular Emerson came up to her and said, "The girls and I have decided we like you. You can sit at our lunch table from now on, but you have to ditch Julia. There's no way she's sitting with us."

Mahre was tempted by Emerson's offer, the same way Jesus was tempted by the devil in the desert. But just like Emerson said Mahre had to ditch Julia, the devil said Jesus had to turn against God and worship the devil instead.

Despite being incredibly weak from 40 days without food, Jesus found the strength to resist the temptation. Mahre did the same. She and Julia have been friends ever since.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, please protect me from all temptation by giving me the strength and courage to always do the right thing.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Postpone dinner until everyone is really, really hungry. Then place your favorite treats on the table. Discuss whether you'd like to donate them to your local food pantry instead of eating them for dessert. What's it like to make that decision while hungry?

Who Really Deserves the Credit?

Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:31

IF YOU'RE A BASKETBALL FAN, YOU KNOW GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS' PLAYER STEPHEN CURRY. At just 31 years of age, he's been voted the MVP twice, broken the single-game record for the most three-pointers and is considered by some to be the greatest shooter in NBA history. In his MVP acceptance speech, he said, "I want to thank God, obviously for the health, for the talent he's given me."

How often do we hear famous people giving credit to God for their talent? Sadly, almost never. We can fall into the same trap of failing to recognize that our talents are God-given. When we ace a test, score the winning goal or perform flawlessly on stage, we tend to take all the glory for ourselves. While we may have worked very hard at perfecting our skills and talents, we need to stop and recognize who gifted us with them.

Jesus himself routinely pointed to God as his source for everything. We need to be more like him, and Stephen Curry, and do the same.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, remind me, often, that you were the one who gifted me with my skills and talents. May I always remember to praise you and thank you for them. Please help me to do my best to develop them as well.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Share what you think your gifts and talents are. Together, brainstorm ways you can give credit to God so others can see that he is your source.

Role-Reversal Life

But whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant,
and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave.

MATTHEW 20:26-27

EVERY SUMMER, I PLAN SURPRISE ADVENTURES FOR MY KIDS. A few days each week, all I tell them is how to dress and what time to get in the car. Then, off we go to places and events I think they'll enjoy.

Last summer, however, they complained that the adventures weren't fun enough. Out of frustration and hurt, I declared a Role-Reversal Day: My three kids had to plan a day filled with activities that I would enjoy. And, they had to do all of my chores! That's how they learned how much thought and effort go into the adventure days. Furthermore, feeling the focus shift from them to me helped them realize that making someone else happy brought them true joy. It was an invaluable lesson that will be repeated often.

Our world tries to convince us to always put ourselves first, something that leads straight to selfishness. However, Our Savior taught that every day should be a Role-Reversal Day. Putting other people's wants, needs and enjoyment before our own is how we create God's kingdom here on earth. On that Role-Reversal Day we call Good Friday, Jesus put our needs ahead of his own and won for us the crown of eternal life.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, prompt me to put the wants, needs and enjoyment of others before my own.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Try a Role-Reversal Day of your own.

Getting Creative

And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. **MARK 2:4**

“**I**T’S POURING OUTSIDE!” BRENDON GROANED. “I promised my friends there’d be s’mores at my sleepover tonight. We’ll never get a campfire going now.”

“We can solve this,” Brendon’s mom said. A minute later, she exclaimed, “I’ve got it!” Brendon watched as she microwaved a marshmallow and then placed it, and some chocolate, between two graham crackers. “This is delicious,” Brendon said, with a mouth full of s’more. “You’re a genius, Mom!”

Life doesn’t always turn out like we planned. But when we lean on God by asking for his guidance and then get creative, oftentimes, we can solve the problems that come our way. That’s exactly what happened in the story that is told in Mark, chapter 2. Friends wanted to bring a crippled man to Jesus, but they couldn’t get through the door with the big crowd. They didn’t give up; they got creative instead. They climbed up onto the roof, peeled it back and lowered their friend down on a mat. Sure enough, Jesus saw the crippled man and cured him.

WITH OUR SAVIOR » Dear God, guide me to creative solutions for the problems that come my way.

WITH YOUR FAMILY » Work together to build a rolling vehicle using four buttons, one piece of card stock, 10 inches of tape, eight paperclips and two straws. And, be sure to have fun doing it!

With Our SAVIOR

CELEBRATE YOUR FAITH TOGETHER AS A FAMILY THIS LENT AS YOU GO THROUGH THE SEASON "WITH OUR SAVIOR!" Every day of Lent is an opportunity to bring yourself and your family closer to the joy of Easter. Scripture, reflection, prayer and activities are presented here, encouraging you and your family members to embrace the beautiful Lenten traditions that have been passed down to us for generations. Put your faith into action and have fun while doing it as you keep Jesus, our Savior, with you every day!



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